

ALL. OSWALD. That is correct.
 Mr. JENNER. Just the two of you, or did anybody accompany you?
 Mr. OSWALD. Three of us.
 Mr. JENNER. Did you have a rifle?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; I did.
 Mr. JENNER. Those I take it were .22's.
 Mr. OSWALD. All three were .22 caliber, that is correct.
 Mr. JENNER. Where did you obtain them?
 Mr. OSWALD. Two of them belonged to me and one of them belonged to my brother-in-law.
 Mr. JENNER. Your brother-in-law?
 Mr. OSWALD. My brother-in-law.
 Mr. JENNER. What is his name?
 Mr. OSWALD. S. R. Mercer, Jr.
 Mr. JENNER. What was the occasion of this trip? How did it come about? Did you suggest it, your brother-in-law, Lee or how?
 Mr. OSWALD. The day that I recall that Lee stayed with us in—between the time he was discharged and the time he was supposed to be leaving for New Orleans was a period of 2 to 3 days. One of those days, I feel sure was a Saturday, either we spent all day out at my in-laws' farm or the afternoon at the farm at which time Lee and I, and my brother-in-law went hunting.
 Mr. DULLES. Was this a couple of days before he left for Russia?
 Mr. OSWALD. This was a couple of days before he left for New Orleans or about 1 day or 2 days before he left for New Orleans.
 Mr. DULLES. And then he shipped out?
 Mr. OSWALD. To locate a job.
 Mr. JENNER. On that occasion, that incident, did he have occasion to discharge the .22 caliber rifle he was carrying?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; he did.
 Mr. JENNER. Did you see him do so?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.
 Mr. JENNER. From what shoulder did he, against which shoulder did he place the butt of the gun?
 Mr. OSWALD. The right shoulder.
 Mr. JENNER. And with which hand or fingers of which hand did he pull the trigger and discharge the gun?
 Mr. OSWALD. The right hand, sir.
 Mr. JENNER. Did he exhibit any proficiency in the use of that .22 caliber gun on that occasion?
 Mr. OSWALD. I would say an average amount.
 Mr. JENNER. Hunting rabbits or squirrels with a rifle takes pretty good marksmanship. Did any of you boys bring down a rabbit or squirrel, on the fly, I mean?
 Mr. OSWALD. As I recall, one small, very small cottontail as he ran across the peanut field, all three of us were shooting at him, and my weapon that I had, one of the weapons that belonged to me, was a semiautomatic .22 and I perhaps had a burst of four or five rounds that I said I got him. But all three of us were shooting at him.
 Mr. McKENZIE. Did all three of you claim him?
 Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; I did.
 Mr. JENNER. Was that your only victory on that hunting trip or did someone else shoot down a squirrel or a rabbit?
 Mr. OSWALD. No squirrels were killed that day and perhaps I believe this was the occasion that we went into what we called a briar patch located off to the left of the farmhouse; at that particular time it was very thick with cottontails, and I believe we exterminated about eight of them at that time between the three of us because it was the type of brush and thorns that didn't grow very high but we were able to see over them, so getting three of us out there it wasn't very hard to kill eight of them.
 Mr. JENNER. Now, had you and your brother engaged in this very light form of hunting at any other time during your lifetime?

MR. OSWALD. Yes, sir.
 Mr. JENNER. Would you indicate the frequency of that?
 Mr. OSWALD. If I recall, only one other occasion that we had been hunting together. This was during a leave that Lee had from the Marine Corps.
 Mr. JENNER. During a leave that he had?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir. And at which time, if I may correct myself there, another time comes to mind, I recall two times that we had this type of light hunting out there at that farm, at the same place. One time was during a leave that he had from the Marine Corps. I don't recall of any game at that particular time that we shot. I know we did handle the rifle and fired maybe target practice, something along that line. I don't recall of anything.
 The second time that I now remember is during his stay after he returned from Russia, during his stay at my home in Fort Worth, that my wife and I and our children took him and his wife and child out to the farm to meet our in-laws, my in-laws, and also to do a little hunting while we was out there, and which we did just a very little bit. I believe this was on a Sunday afternoon and we didn't stay out very long.
 Mr. JENNER. What weapons did you use on that occasion?
 Mr. OSWALD. On that occasion, I believe the same weapons we used before.
 Mr. JENNER. Would that be true of all three occasions?
 Mr. OSWALD. I believe on the first occasion, which was the occasion that Lee came home on leave, that at that time I only owned one .22 rifle.
 Mr. JENNER. Was that the semiautomatic?
 Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; it was not the semiautomatic, it was a bolt action rifle, with a clip on it. However, I believe Lee either used my brother-in-law's rifle—
 Mr. JENNER. Was that a bolt-action rifle?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; it is a bolt-action rifle. He either used that rifle or a single-shot, bolt-action rifle, another .22 that was out at the farm.
 Mr. JENNER. On the occasion during which you went hunting during that 3-day period, interregnum his return and his discharge and his departure for New Orleans, was the weapon he employed a bolt-action weapon?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; it was.
 Mr. JENNER. Is it a fair statement on my part that on all the occasions that you recall hunting with Lee he employed a bolt-action rifle?
 Mr. OSWALD. That is correct, sir.
 Mr. JENNER. During your youth and prior to these occasions about which you testified, do you know of the fact or know by rumor or otherwise that your brother engaged in this light hunting or other kind of hunting where he used a firearm even though he was not with you or you did not accompany him?
 Mr. OSWALD. I feel surely that he did, without recalling any particular time that he told me, but his interest along that line was generally like mine, that is hunting and fishing, and I am sure when he had an opportunity to hunt that he did so.
 Mr. DULLES. Did he ever tell you about hunting in Russia?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; he did.
 Mr. JENNER. Would you relate that, please, tell us when the conversation took place and the circumstances, if it was a conversation?
 Mr. OSWALD. The circumstances was it was in a letter I received from him.
 Mr. JENNER. Is that one of the letters you produced?
 Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; it is.
 Mr. JENNER. Did you have any conversation with him in addition to the letter, apart from the letter?
 Mr. OSWALD. I believe I did along that line because as I stated our interests in hunting and fishing was mutual and he did state that he was able to—
 Mr. JENNER. In response to Mr. Dulles' question, would you give the conversation? We will take care of the letter in the morning.
 Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; I am trying to give the conversation.
 Mr. JENNER. Thank you. Proceed.
 Mr. OSWALD. That we talked about hunting over there, and he said that

he had only been hunting a half dozen times, and so forth, and that he had only used a shotgun, and a couple of times he did shoot a duck.

Mr. JENNER. It was all shotgun shooting, no rifle shooting?

Mr. OSWALD. No rifle shooting, no sir. That is all they were allowed to have, the shotgun.

Mr. JENNER. This conversation took place, as I understand it, on his return from Russia when he was living with you for that month, that would be June-July of 1962?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; that is correct.

Mr. JENNER. And that is the extent of the conversation?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; that is.

Mr. JENNER. As you now recall it—there have been some reports, and they are only reports as far as we of the staff are concerned, of speculation about a television set, whether your brother purchased or owned a television set and whether he purchased it outright or on time with a guarantee from you. What information or knowledge do you have in that connection?

Mr. OSWALD. I am not aware that he purchased a television set, sir. I did at his request, when he and Marina and the baby were living in Fort Worth.

Mr. JENNER. Where in Fort Worth?

Mr. OSWALD. Mercedes Street in Fort Worth, in a small duplex which was—

Mr. JENNER. Can you fix even more definitely the time of this event?

Mr. OSWALD. This was approximately the latter part of September, 1962.

And at his request—

Mr. JENNER. He came to you, excuse me.

Mr. OSWALD. He called me, sir.

Mr. JENNER. He called you by telephone?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; he called me at my office from his place of employment in Fort Worth at that time.

Mr. JENNER. Give us the substance of what he said.

Mr. OSWALD. We talked briefly about how each family was doing, and so forth, and he said that he would like to establish credit and he had tried to charge something at Montgomery Ward's at Fort Worth, the West 7th Street store, and they had stated that he needed to have somebody cosign or vouch for him, and this was his request to me, and I said gladly I would do so, and late that afternoon after work, this was approximately 5:30 by the time I arrived at Montgomery Ward, I did sign for Lee's charge account. However, I was not aware of what he was charging.

Mr. JENNER. There was no discussion, I take it, at that time of what—the use to which he intended to put his credit?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; I believe perhaps he did mention something about a baby chair and a baby bed.

Mr. JENNER. Was there ever any discussion between you about his purchase or acquisition of a television set?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; there was not.

Mr. JENNER. Were you ever in his home or apartment?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; I was.

Mr. JENNER. Did you see a television set there?

Mr. OSWALD. Pardon me, you are referring to the apartment on Mercedes Street, is that correct?

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, I was in his home quite a few times and there was not a television set that I remember.

Mr. JENNER. On any occasion that you were there?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. On any occasion when you were in any place of residence of your brother after his return to the United States, did you see in those premises a television set?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Where was that?

Mr. OSWALD. At my house and at my mother's house.

Mr. JENNER. I should have been more specific and identified a residence as one of his own rather than living with you or living with your mother.

Mr. OSWALD. At no residence that he lived in that I was aware of at any time did I see him with a television set that I would take to be his own.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever have any discussions—did any discussion ever occur between the two of you with respect to his acquisition of a television set?

Mr. OSWALD. None that I recall, sir.

Mr. JENNER. This is, as far as you are concerned, a total blank, this television set matter?

Mr. OSWALD. That is correct, sir.

Mr. DULLES. I think we had better adjourn pretty soon. This man has had quite an ordeal for the day.

Mr. JENNER. It is acceptable.

Mr. DULLES. Is it acceptable to you?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. OSWALD. I have no objection to continuing.

Mr. McKENZIE. If you would prefer to reconvene tomorrow morning we can reconvene then.

Mr. RANKIN. I think 9 o'clock is better. I think we can finish up in the morning.

Mr. DULLES. Thank you. At 9 o'clock in the morning.

(Whereupon, at 5:15 p.m., the President's Commission recessed.)

Friday, February 21, 1964

TESTIMONY OF ROBERT EDWARD LEE OSWALD RESUMED

The President's Commission met at 9 a.m. on February 21, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C.

Present were Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman; and Allen W. Dulles, member.

Also present were J. Lee Rankin, general counsel; Albert E. Jenner, Jr., assistant counsel; Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel; and William McKenzie, attorney for Robert Edward Lee Oswald.

The Chairman. Gentlemen, the Commission will be in order.

As yesterday, I will only be able to be here for a comparatively short time, because we have our weekly conference of the Supreme Court today. And when I leave, Mr. Allen Dulles will conduct the hearing. We will now proceed with the testimony.

Mr. JENNER. Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.

I would like to return, Mr. Oswald, to the time that your brother Lee was discharged from military service and spent approximately 3 days at home. You recall that period?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; I do.

Mr. JENNER. Now, would you please describe his physical appearance the last time you saw him during that 3-day period?

Mr. OSWALD. His hair was brown and curly, a full set of hair. His physical appearance—he was trim, weighed approximately 140 pounds, he was approximately 5 foot 9½, he seemed to be in fine physical shape at that time.

Mr. JENNER. I mentioned 3 days. Was I wrong about the 3 days, or was it a little longer period?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; my recollection on that period was 2 or 3 days, and only during one of these days do I remember seeing him. He spent the day at our house.

Mr. JENNER. It was your impression, sir, that he was in good health, bright and alert mentally at that time?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir. I have never known him to handle anything—throw a baseball, football, et cetera, fire a rifle, or do anything, left handed.

Mr. JENNER. In order to be certain of the details in this respect, when he wrote, did he write with his right or his left hand?

Mr. OSWALD. Right handed.

Mr. JENNER. Right handed?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And you in fact have seen him write with his right hand?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir, I have.

Mr. JENNER. During your youth?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever—was there ever an occasion when you saw him write or attempt to write with his left hand?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir, I have never seen him at any time, on any occasion, ever attempt to write or do anything left handed.

Mr. JENNER. You really covered my next question, but I would like to ask it anyhow.

There are men in athletics who are either right handed or left handed, but who throw or bat or do something from the other side.

Did he ever throw left handed or in any athletic endeavor employ his left hand predominantly as against his right hand?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; not to my knowledge, he never did.

Mr. JENNER. From your many years of experience with him, being associated with him, as his brother, was he a predominantly right-handed person?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; he most certainly was.

Representative FORB. And you personally saw him throw, kick, or do anything athletic over the years, and saw him use his right hand exclusively?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir. I would say without qualification—I might be repeating myself here—at no time did I ever know him to do anything left handed, to the extent that it would be predominant. Of course his hands worked together, and so forth. But I have never known him to do anything left handed.

Mr. JENNER. From your long acquaintance with him, and your intimate knowledge of his physical characteristics in that respect, do you have an opinion as to whether he was instinctively right-handed or instinctively a left-handed person?

Mr. OSWALD. I would say he was instinctively a right-handed person.

Mr. JENNER. In all the years you were with him, you had opportunity to see him react instantaneously without having time to think about using his right hand or left hand?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Did you observe him on many occasions?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes. I have never known him to use his left hand in any manner when an occasion would require that he use either hand—instinctively went to his right hand.

Mr. JENNER. Was he a coordinated person in the use of his right hand? Some are not coordinated athletically.

Mr. OSWALD. My opinion of this, sir, would be that he was coordinated to the extent that looking at myself and many, I would compare us as two peas in a pod. Quite fast, well coordinated.

Mr. JENNER. He was dextrous?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And well coordinated?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And you had an opportunity over the years to see him engage in athletics, did you?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. During your youth, as a young man, in any event, did you and your brother John and Lee have an interest in guns, rifles, pistols, cap guns, firearms generally?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; we certainly did. I would say this.

Mr. JENNER. Now, this includes all three of you?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir; I understand that.

Of course John and I, when we attended military school, we had more of an opportunity to become acquainted with firearms. We certainly played with cap pistols, rubber guns, et cetera, when we were young. Lee did the same thing.

However, I would say this. Mother did not like firearms.

Mr. DULLES. We will recess now until 2 o'clock this afternoon.

(Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the President's Commission recessed.)

Afternoon Session

TESTIMONY OF ROBERT EDWARD LEE OSWALD RESUMED

The President's Commission reconvened at 2 p.m.

Mr. DULLES. The Commission will come to order.

Mr. DULLES. Mr. Jenner, will you please continue?

Mr. JENNER. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Reporter, would you read the last question and answer we have so we can orient ourselves.

To refresh your recollection, Mr. Oswald, I had commenced to examine you with respect to the interests of yourself, your brother John, and your brother Lee in firearms, even at the children's stage. And you had indicated developments in that area as you became older.

I think you reached the point where, as an example, you said of course your brother John and yourself had attended military school.

Mr. OSWALD. And, also, I believe, sir, the question referred to all three of us.

Mr. JENNER. Yes.

Mr. OSWALD. To what extent we were familiar with firearms.

To elaborate, at military school John was by far the better shot of the two of us. He was on the school rifle team. And, at this time, I was 10 years old—when I first attended there. My hunting instinct came alive.

Mr. JENNER. Hunting?

Mr. OSWALD. Hunting instinct came alive, and at the first opportunity I started hunting squirrels and so forth there in Mississippi. I did this on practically every occasion I had. John was on the rifle team. And up to that time, a number of years after that, we never had a firearm in the house. My mother didn't like them. She was scared of them. And after we moved to 7408 Ewing Street, none of us owned a rifle, even a .22, or a shotgun, or any type of firearm. And when I wanted to go hunting from there, I had various friends that had rifles that I would borrow, and I would go to the west side of Fort Worth, and Benbrook, and do my squirrel hunting.

I don't recall at anytime during that period that Lee went with me. I don't know that John did—because approximately this time he had reached the age of 17, at which time he joined the U.S. Coast Guard.

Mr. JENNER. This is when you moved over to Ewing Street in Fort Worth?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Up to that time, had you and Lee at any time gone hunting?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir; I do not recall any time that we went hunting at that time.

Mr. JENNER. This was 1948-49. So he was 9 to 10 years old?

Mr. OSWALD. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Had, to your knowledge, Lee gone hunting or used firearms or played or been interested in firearms with you or with your brother?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir. To my knowledge I don't remember any time he went hunting with myself or my older brother John. As I stated, there was no firearms in the house.

He liked cap pistols, like any other kid. And to the extent that we didn't even own a BB gun.

Mr. JENNER. Had you ever had BB guns around your home?

Mr. OSWALD. No, sir.